

INDIANA SINCLAIR-TIMEX USERS GROUP NEWSLETTER1

Sample issue June 1986

Welcome to prospective members of the ISTUG, INDIANA SINCLAIR-TIMEX USERS GROUP. This newsletter is primarily to give us a common link for the exchange of ideas on how we can get the very most out of our ZX and TS computers and their peripherals. It is open to both questions and contributions from you, both members and audience. If you have an idea that may help users or a program, or need help to figure out how to get a program or piece of hardware to work properly, let us know.

I hope that those of you who made it to the 1st MIDWEST TIMEX SINCLAIR COMPUTER FEST enjoyed it and will be just as ready to attend the 2nd MIDWEST TIMEX SINCLAIR COMPUTER FEST. I had quite a bit in putting on the 1st one, as I originated the idea, worked on the committee and handled most of the publicity and the advertising. I now have been forming up a committee to handle the 2nd MIDWEST TIMEX SINCLAIR COMPUTER FEST. This one is going to be held in Indianapolis, next May.

Anyone out there who is interested in helping out to make this a reality is urged to contact me via mail at :

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A TS1500 A&J MICRO DRIVE PROBLEM AND SOLUTION

Willie Jones

First let me introduce myself, and give credit to the man that made this article possible. My name is WILLIE JONES and the man who solved my problem is FRED NACHBAUR. He sells and writes software for SILICON MOUNTAIN COMPUTERS, formerly known as SYNCWARE COMPANY. I am the proud owner of a TS1500, A&J 1000 Micro Drive and TS1016 Rampack. But not all was happy. When I first connected the A&J, 1016, and 2040 printer and was ready to go. Little was I to know what was ahead for me. I then started to take all of my most used software and proceeded to put them on wafers. All was well UNTIL I tried to save my 27K PROFILE, and that was the start of all my problems.

Well, I should have had no problem, but was I fooled. To begin with the A&J ES05 (EXATRON STRINGY OPERATING SYSTEM) TAKES THE TOP 1K OF RAM FOR MANIPULATION OF THE ES05. For a 1500 plus the 1016 rampack, I should have had 32k, minus the 1k for the ES05, and you have 31k left. So a little math tells me I should have had 4k left to burn. boy was I surprised when all I got was verify BAD5 (a bad verify everytime you try to save a program in the upper part of memory).

It was no help when I changed 1016 Rampacks, then computers, and even sending my A&J Interface for a replacement. so with no luck I was at a standstill. However there is a way to use the A&J, but without a wafer directory or any type of management other than numbered saves, and that is in ECONOMY MODE.

In economy mode you have no way of knowing how much memory is left and you stand the chance of overwriting a program already on the wafer.

Now let me tell you why this whole problem arises and the way around the problem. The whole thing revolves around the 1016 ram pack. It seems that it is not fully decoded, so when the A&J tries to take ram to the top, it takes it beyond the 32k limit. Then when the ES05 tries to store its save check information and verification, it has nothing to compare with. Therefore giving a VERIFY BAD everytime you try to save a program in the upper part of memory.

Now for some good news, but first let me thank Fred Nachbaur once more for his help, without it I would not be writing this. The way around this trouble using the 1016 ram pack is to by-pass the ES05 RAM SET. To do that all you have to do is poke ram top to 31k or less. I use POKE 16388,0, then POKE 16389,188, then NEW. This gives me 31k. Now instead of using USR12345, use USR13082. This will put you into the ES05 and the A&J will work normally.

When I talked to Fred he said to poke ram top to 192 for the full 32k, but he also said he had not tried this. So To make a long story short I tried and had no luck. But by leaving 1k open the system works great.

The reason for this is the ES05 needs the top 1k, by going past the RAM SET I think it effects the initialization process of the ES05.

Well, I hope I did not bore you and I hope this helps you A&J, TS1500 fans. I know it helped me.

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Our first meeting to get this group organized was held at Willie Jones house in May. Five people, including myself showed up. This was not too bad considering we held the meeting the day before the Indy 500 was supposed to run. The meeting mainly consisted of the 5 of us getting acquainted with each other and reviewing what type of hardware and software the others had. Now it is time to get down to really getting this user group off the ground and I do mean for real. We all have a lot to offer each other in the way of tips and general help and support in the pursuit of our computing HOBBY. So let us have more people show up at the next meeting, NONE OF US KNOWS SO LITTLE ABOUT COMPUTERS OR SO MUCH THAT WE CANNOT BENEFIT FROM GETTING ORGANIZED AND HAVE A BIT OF FUN AT THE SAME TIME.

THE NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THE 28TH OF JUNE, AT WILLIE JONES HOUSE. IT WILL BE AT 1:30 P.M. FOR DIRECTIONS GIVE WILLIE A CALL AT HIS NUMBER GIVEN IN THE ARTICLE ABOVE. For anyother call for general information about the group you can also call me, FRANK DAVIS at 317-473-4885 in the evenings.

Hope to see each and everone or you there.